THE OCCURRENCE OF *OPSIPHANES TAMARINDI* FELDER & FELDER (LEPIDOPTERA: SATYRIDAE) IN BRITAIN

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Opsiphanes tamarindi is a large (forewing length 40-60mm), polytypic, neotropical species of the Satyrid subfamily brassolinae, with a range from Mexico to southern Peru. The larval foodplants commonly include banana, and the larvae sometimes occur in sufficient numbers to be a serious pest. It is not surprizing therefore that *tamarindi* occasionally occurs as an accidental import with bananas. To date, I know of five records for Britain: Eastbourne (Andrews, 1931), London (Thompson, 1937), Edinburgh in 1978, Glasgow in 1979 (Thomson, 1980 and Ramsey Market in 1981 (from Belize, J. Heath, *pers. comm.*), as well as one for Rotterdam, Holland (from Colombia, Jurriaanse, 1923) and nine from New Zealand (from Ecuador, A. Harris, *pers. comm.*).

Both the Eastbourne and Ramsey Heath specimens had travelled as pupae. The former was captured by Robert Adkin whilst in the process of drying its wings; the latter emerged from a pupa found by a Mrs. G. D. Oliver in a bunch of bananas on a stall in Ramsey Market.

Subspecific determination of *tamarindi* is difficult without both sexes. As the Ramsey Heath male originated in Belize, it can be confidently assigned to nominate *tamarindi* which has a range from Mexico to Panama. A colour slide and photograph of the Edinburgh female was kindly supplied by Dr. Mark Shaw of the Royal Scottish Museum. It has a fairly large apical ocellus on the hindwing underside, and in this respect it is matched most closely by specimens from the Magdalena Valley, Colombia, or Atlantic Panama. *O.tamarindi* from these localities are currently regarded as a form of nominate *tamarindi* (Bristow, in prep.). Mr. G. Thomson (*pers. comm.*) checked his Glasgow female against my photographs of type *t. tamarindi*, *t. corrosus* (from Ecuador) and *t. mesomerista* (from western Venezuela). It matches none of these and I suspect that, like the Edinburgh specimen, it is the Colombian form of nominate *tamarindi*. Neither Scottish specimen could have come from Surinam (Thomson, 1980:202); apart from a dubious Trinidad specimen in the BMNH, *tamarindi* does not occur farther east than western Venezuela. The London specimen is no longer to be found in the Passmore Edwards Museum (C. Plant, *pers. comm.*), and I do not know the whereabouts of Adkin's *tamarindi*. Much of Adkin's collection passed to the British Museum

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(Natural History), but a search by Mr. R. I. Vane-Wright failed to find this specimen.

I would be interested to hear through these columns of any other occurrences of *tamarindi* (or any other brassolinid) in Britain. Howarth (1973) has no record of *tamarindi* either in, or brought to, the British Museum (Natural History) (as part of a generic revision of *Opsiphanes* I have been through all the neotropical collections in the BMNH and there are no British specimens). Dr. I. D. Wallace of Merseyside County Museum, and Mr. J. Deeming of the National Museum of Wales, searched their respective drawers of imported 'exotics', but no *Opsiphanes* were found. Finally Messrs. J. Heath and P. R. Syemour kindly searched the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food records of 'intercepts' up to 1984, again to no avail.

References

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THE EARLY INSTARS OF THE LARVA OF EUPROCTIS SIMILIS (FUESSLY) (LEP.: LYMANTRIIDAE). — On the 4th of September, 1985, when in Tunstall Forest, east Suffolk, I found on an alder leaf a number of larvae newly hatched from a batch of ova covered with hairs from the anal tuft of the female. These eventually turned out to be a *E. similis*, but neither I nor my companions recognised them. In the first two instars the ground colour was dark purplish brown, the dorsal stripe deep orange-yellow and the other markings paler yellow; white was entirely absent. The second instar was similar. Only in the third instar did the familiar scarlet, black and white pattern appear.

Was this an aberrant batch of larvae or is this the normal, but apparently unrecorded, coloration of the young larva? — A. M. EMMET, Labrey Cottage, Victoria Gardens, Saffron Walden, Essex, CB11 3AF.